

Historical Questions ²

FROM THE

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K
WITH

A N S W E R S.

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MENDIP SCHOOLS.

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Historical Questions, &c.

LESSON I.

WHAT book does the Bible open with ?

Genesis.

What is Genesis ?

Creation, God created the world.

Who were the first man and woman ?

Adam and Eve, who lived in Paradise.

Why did they leave Paradise ?

Because they ate the forbidden fruit ; it was the sin of disobedience, which God does not forgive till repented of.

Who tempted them ?

Satan or the Devil, in the form of a serpent, tempted Eve and she Adam.

What is this first sin called ?

It is called the *fall* ; the meaning is, the fall from innocence to guilt : after this, we were all born in sin, and should be lost for ever, if Jesus Christ, the Son of God, had not died, to redeem us from the sad effects of the transgression of our first parents.

LESSON II.

WHO were the first-born of Adam and Eve ?

2

Cain

Cain and Abel; Cain was a tiller of the ground, and Abel a keeper of sheep. Cain was wicked and envious, and slew his brother Abel.

Is envy a bad passion?

Nothing more wicked; because if any person be in more favour with God, and better off than I am, I should be glad, and not spiteful and envious.

When the world was peopled did men behave thankfully to the Almighty for his great goodness to them?

No, so wickedly, that God drowned the world by rain from heaven, as a punishment for their great sins.

Was every body destroyed?

No, God saved Noah, because he was righteous, and all his family, in an ark which he caused him to build.

How do we know that God will not destroy us by another flood or deluge as it is called?

Because he gave his rain-bow as a token, with a promise that he never would drown the world again.

LESSON III.

WAS the world soon peopled again?

Yes; Noah and his three sons, Shem, Ham, and Japheth had large families.

What did the people do next?

They

They built a tower called Babel, which in their pride and vanity they intended should reach the heavens.

Did they finish it ?

No, because it was begun in pride, God did not suffer it to be completed, but confounded their language, and they did not understand each other, consequently they could not go on.— This should teach us that pride is indeed particularly hateful to God.

LESSON IV.

WHO was the next righteous man after Noah ?

Abraham, whom God commanded to leave his country, and promised him the land of Canaan. His wife's name was Sarah.

Was there any very wicked people at this time ?

Yes, the people of Sodom were so wicked, that God destroyed them by fire from heaven.

Had Abraham any children ?

Yes, one son Isaac.

Wherein was Abraham's faith most tried ?

When God ordered him to sacrifice his darling son. — Did he obey the Lord ?

Yes, he prepared the sacrifice, and bound his dear child : by this God was convinced of his dutifulness, he stopped his hand just as he was going to offer him, and sent him, instead of his son, a ram for the sacrifice.

What do you learn from this ?

That if we obey God, whatever may be our trials, if we preserve but our faith, we shall often be relieved and comforted by him, saved in the greatest distress, trouble and danger ; but if it be not his pleasure to do this for us, we must submit to his will, which is always best for us.

DID Isaac grow up a good man ?

LESSON V.

Yes, and he married Rebekah, and Jacob (who was afterwards called Israel) was their son.

Had Jacob many children ?

Yes, twelve sons, whose generation are all called the children of Israel.

Which of his children were Jacob's favourites ?

Joseph and Benjamin.

Were the others equally good ?

No, they were wicked enough to envy Joseph, because he was better than themselves ; and from envy, sold him as a slave into Egypt.

What became of him there ?

He bore his misfortunes with such submission, that God who saw his patience, raised him, to be a great man in King Pharaoh's palace.

What do you learn from this ?

That God always sees the heart, and therefore knows when to punish, and when to reward, according as his wisdom directs. If Joseph had been cross and impatient under his afflictions, the Al-

Almighty would not have been pleased with him.

LESSON VI.

DID Jacob ever see Joseph again?

Yes, there was a famine in the land of Canaan, where Jacob lived, and he sent his other sons to Egypt to buy corn.

Did they get any?

Yes, they bought of Pharaoh the King, who had a great quantity, owing to the industry and care of Joseph, who never wasted a bit the more for having a great plenty, but saved it to help his neighbours and the poor.

What did Joseph's brothers say when they saw him a great man, and living with the King?

Their consciences smote them, and they were ashamed to look so much innocence in the face; this is always the case with guilt; but God, who sees the heart, always keeps up the head of the innocent.

Did Joseph behave proudly in his high station?

No, he was meek and lowly, weeping on his brothers necks; and was so compassionate as to desire them not to reproach themselves, though they could not avoid it, for guilt must ever be miserable.

LESSON VII.

DID not so tender-hearted a man as Joseph long to see his father?

Yes, and he sent all sorts of presents to him,
and

and carriages to fetch him and his family into Egypt.

Did Jacob come into Egypt ?

Yes, with all his family, he staid at Beersheba by the way, to offer sacrifices of thanksgiving, not only that Joseph was alive and become a great man; but because he was increased in goodness and favour with God; which was better than all his wealth.

Where did Jacob die ?

In Egypt, in an honourable old age, blessing all his sons and grand-sons; but Joseph buried him in the land of Canaan.

Did Joseph live long after ?

Yes, to a good old age, blessing and praising God: he never left good King Pharaoh, but died in Egypt.

What do you particularly learn from the history of Joseph ?

To be patient under injuries, always cherishing a christian spirit of forgiveness, learning to forgive others, that Jesus Christ may forgive us.

LESSON VIII.
WHAT is the next book in the Bible ?

Exodus; the meaning is departure, or the going away of the children of Israel out of Egypt.

Who was the next King of Egypt ?

Pharaoh again, but this Pharaoh was a wicked man, and not like Joseph's good King.

Who

Who was the best man at this time ?

Moses, who was in particular favour with God, for his meekness and dutifulness.

Was this King kind to the Israelites ?

No, he kept them prisoners in Egypt, expected hard work of them which they could not perform ; and gave them but little food, besides beating, and otherwise using them cruelly.

Did they not ask the King to let them go to their own country ?

Yes, they sent Moses to beg and beseech him to let them depart ; but he was so wicked, that after promising them continually, he always broke his word, and would not let them go.

LESSON IX.

DID not God punish Pharaoh for his cruelty to the children of Israel ?

Yes, he sent them ten plagues, which we read of in the book of Exodus. Every time he promised Moses they should go, and then was so wicked as to break his word, therefore God punished the Egyptians with these dreadful plagues ; but they never reached the Israelites, because God protected them.

Was not Pharaoh at last afraid of the vengeance of the Almighty ?

He was, and out of fear only, and not from a sense of duty he let them all go away.

How did they go ?

We read "that God led the people about through the way of the wilderness, by the Red Sea, and the children of Israel went up harnessed out of the land of Egypt."

How did they find their way?

God himself was so good as to guide them, for we read again, "that the Lord went before them by day in a pillar of a cloud, to lead them on the way, and by night in a pillar of fire to give them light, to go by day and night; he took not away the pillar of the cloud by day, nor the pillar of fire by night from before the people."

What do you learn from this?

Never to doubt the power and goodness of God, but always to trust in him in the way he directs us for help and protection.

LESSON X.

WHAT did proud King Pharaoh say when he let the children of Israel go?

He repented immediately, and God having forsaken him, because of his wickedness, he declared he would follow them.

And did he pursue them?

Yes, but God saved them, by enabling Moses to perform a great miracle; for he commanded him to lift his rod over the sea, and the water was divided, so that the children of Israel passed through upon dry ground.

Did the Egyptians still follow them?

Yes,

Yes, and they went in after them to the midst of the sea, which had been driven away by the power of God for the conveniency of the Israelites; but as soon as the Egyptians arrived, the water returned, and they were all drowned.

Was not this great cause of thankfulness to the Israelites?

Yes, and if I learn the 15th chapter of Exodus, which contains the Song of Moses, I shall be able to praise God for his mercies to the Israelites as long as I live.

LESSON XI.

WERE the Israelites ever dissatisfied after in their journey to the land of Canaan, having received such great mercies?

Yes, they continually complained and murmured; they also were very hungry, having travelled a great way without any food.

How could they get victuals in a desert?

God was with them, and he can provide food as well in an wood as in a town.

And did the Almighty provide for them in the wilderness?

Yes, for we read "that the Lord said unto Moses, I will reign bread from heaven." But he commanded them to take no more than would satisfy them every day, except on the sixth day, when they were to take a double portion to serve the seventh, which plainly teaches us, we should

do no sort of work on the sabbath-day, that we may have all our time to go to church, read our Bibles, and praise God who is the giver of every blessing we enjoy.

Did not they then attend to all they were told ?

No, for the disobedient put by some slyly ; but it was of no use ; for it breed worms and stank. This bread was called manna.

How did that keep then that was saved for the sabbath ?

That was of God's ordering, and not of man's stealing ; that never perished.

What do you understand by this ?

That God is every where, that it was as easy for him to send food, and provide for the children of Israel forty years in a wilderness, as it was in Egypt, where they had fine markets ; and I likewise learn that he sees every one of our sins, even the little bit of manna which the gluttons hid slyly against his order : it should also teach me to give what I can spare to a poor neighbour.

LESSON XII.

TO whom did the children of Israel look as their leader in all their troubles ?

To Moses, who went, as it were, betwixt them and God.

Did they try his patience ?

Yes, they were too often discontented and unthankful for their daily mercies.

Can

Can you apply this to yourself ?

I believe I can ; for I have Jesus Christ the son of God for my leader, his Gospel for my direction, and the blessings of his sufferings and death, to redeem me from sin, if I repent and believe in him.

Are you not then ashamed of sin, amidst such mercies ?

I ought, and hope I shall be more and more so every day, I hope to bring the Israelites example of discontent home to my heart ; and endeavour not to be cross amidst all my blessings ; but try to thank and praise God every hour of my life, knowing that if I am in danger, he can get me out of it ; if I am starving he can feed me ; and if I am sick, he can cure me ; but then I must have patience to endure all this, if it be his pleasure, which patience I never can obtain, but by looking unto Jesus, trusting in his merits for all I stand in need of, and for the influence of his Holy Spirit, to work in me this as well as every other grace and virtue.

LESSON XIII.

WHAT was God's next goodness to the children of Israel ?

Delivering to them the ten commandments from Mount Sinai, which makes a principal part of the Catechism.

Did God permit Moses to bring the children

of Israel to the land of Canaan, where they so much wished to go?

No, for after he had given to them all the laws which we read of in Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy, and had continually travelled with, and directed them in every way, shewing great patience and perseverance at all times, he became extremely old.

But did not Moses much desire to enter the land of promise with them, after forty years toil in the wilderness?

To be sure he did; but God's will, and our wishes are often very different; yet constant submission to his will, brings more happiness than having our own way, which is frequently a great evil.

DID not Moses even see the promised land?

Yes, God observing his submission get the better of his desires, graciously took him to the top of Mount Nebo, and from thence he could behold all the land of promise; but the Almighty had a higher reward for him than the land of Canaan, the everlasting state of happiness.

Was it not a sad thing for the Israelites to be so very discontented as they were upon every occasion, after receiving so many mercies?

To be sure it was; and I ought to pray every hour of my life, to be more thankful for all I enjoy,

enjoy, seeing God does not try me with hunger in a wilderness, knowing that industry and honesty will always give me bread: besides, the children of Israel had Moses the prophet for their friend and director, but I have Jesus Christ the Son of God for my guide, pattern, and protector, who took the sins of the whole world upon himself, suffered death upon the cross, and is now pleading at the right hand of God for all those who repent and trust in him.

LESSON XV.

WHAT became of the children of Israel after the death of Moses?

Joshua the son of Nun, a favourite of the Almighty, was appointed to command them.

What was the most remarkable event in his life?

God permitted him, and likewise gave him power to command the sun to stand still upon Gibeon, and the moon in the valley of Ajalon, until the Israelites had avenged themselves upon their enemies.

Did they get to the promised land?

Yes, after they had conquered all the heathen nations in their way.

What became of Joshua?

He divided the land into portions, and then died in a good old age, as Moses had done, praising God for all his goodness.

What is the next book in the Bible called?

It is called Judges.

Which is the most remarkable event in it ?

The history of Deborah the prophetess, which I hope to read in the 4th and 5th chapters.

Is there any other particular history spoken of in the book of Judges ?

Yes, the history of Sampson, who was the strongest man we read of in the Bible.

LESSON XVI.

WHOSE history do we next meet with ?

That of Samuel the prophet, whose mother dedicated him to the Lord, as soon as he was born.

Did not the Israelites now become good and leave off complaining ?

No, for now being tired of the Almighty, and his prophet's government, in the sin of impatience and discontent, they demanded a King to rule over them.

Did Samuel grant them one ?

Yes, and Saul, the son of a private man, was promoted to be the first King of the Israelites ; but God can raise up and pull down whom he pleases.

Did Saul fight against the Philistines ?

Yes, he and his son Jonathan successfully, till at last he offended Samuel, by reason of the many sins he committed, so that the prophet left him to himself.

LESSON XVII.

DID Saul at last conquer the Philistines ?

There was at the head of their army a great champion named Goliath, who challenged any one of the Israelites to come and fight with him, and which ever conquered should have the other's army.

And what great man did the Israelites find out to fight with Goliath ?

None ; but a youth called David, the son of Jesse the shepherd, offered himself.

How did a lad dare to venture against a great champion, at the head of an army ?

Because he looked to the power of the Lord his God, and not to the strength of an arm of flesh. The champion Goliath clothed in an armour of brass, at the head of a mighty army with all the wickedness of an unbeliever, trusting in himself, approached to fight.

Did not he destroy the young man in a moment ?

No, for though he had nothing but a few small stones in a little bag, and a sling, yet he came forward, trusting in the might of the Lord his God, and knowing that every thing without him is of no use.—And so, the army ran, for he slung one of these little stones, which reached the forehead of Goliath, and he fell down dead.

What do you observe from this ?

I learn every moment that God's power is manifest in every thing, and that of man avails nothing, without his support ; that faith in God

can do every thing, and the strength of man nothing.

LESSON XVIII.

WAS not King Saul very fond of David after this ?

No, for the people shouted for joy, and the very women and children sung the praises of David ; and Saul being of an ungrateful temper, envied him, and was so wicked as to seek his life.

Did he succeed ?

No, that was impossible, because David still trusted in God, whom Saul had forsaken, therefore in the most alarming dangers he was safe.

What became of Saul ?

He was at last slain in battle, with his son Jonathan, whom David loved.

Did David rejoice in his death ?

No, good people never triumph over the fallen, that is the time they always pray for them ; and 'tis as easy for God to make a poor man a King, as a rich one.

LESSON XIX.

WHAT did the Israelites do with David after Saul's death ?

They made him their King, though he was but a shepherd's son, and he fought all their battles. It was this David who wrote the Psalms ; and is sometimes called the man after God's own heart.

Had he any children ?

Yes, several ; but Solomon succeeded him in the throne, and was crowned King after David's death.

Was Solomon remarkable for any thing ?

Yes, his wisdom : it was he who wrote the Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes.—God likewise permitted him the honour of building the first church, called Solomon's temple. He dedicated it to God in a very solemn manner, with a fine prayer, which I may know if I learn the 8th chapter of the first book of Kings.

Are there any more Kings after Solomon ?

A great many, but none so wise. I may know all their history, if I read attentively the 2d book of Kings, and the two books of Chronicles, which I hope to do.

Are there no good men, and prophets mentioned in these books ?

Yes, several, particularly Elijah and Elisha.

What is a prophet ?

One whom the Almighty enables by his Spirit to foretel events, or things that are to happen.

LESSON XX.

WHAT do you know of Elijah ?

That having prophesied things, which a proud King did not like, he was obliged to hide himself by the Brook Cherith.

How could he get food there by himself ?

His faith was so great, for he knew that what he had done was by the command of God, that

he was sure of having provision, and the Lord ordered the ravens to carry him bread and flesh to eat, and he drank of the brook ; at length that dried, and then God commanded him to go to a poor widow at Zarephath.

What could such a poor woman, as that have to maintain him with ?

Nothing but a little meal and a cruise of oil.

Did that last long ?

Not of itself ; but the Almighty gave his good prophet the power to make it last as long as he wished, which could not have been done, if his faith had failed him a moment.

What did he do for this poor woman ?

He raised her son from the dead, by the power of the Spirit of God which was given him for that purpose.

LESSON XXI.

DID any thing remarkable happen to Elisha while his friend Elijah lived ?

Yes, as he was going up to Bethel there came a parcel of naughty, wicked children, and mocked, and cried out—"Go up, thou bald head, go up, thou bald head."

Did God punish them for this wickedness ?

To be sure, he did not stay for man to reprove them ; but sent two great bears out of the wood, who tore forty-two of them to pieces immediately ; which plainly shews, that children, who mock at any sort of goodness, the Almighty

himself will punish : and especially such as are guilty of the abominable wickedness of mocking any body for their old age, or bald head, both the one and the other being in the order of Providence.

Did Elijah die a common death ?

No, he was taken up to heaven by a whirlwind, leaving Elisha his mantle ; and with it God permitted him also to leave a double portion of his spirit.

Did Elisha live long ?

A great while ; endeavouring to do good both to Kings and people, and then died praising God for all his mercies.

LESSON XXII. WHAT do you next read of ?

The two next books are called Ezra and Nehemiah, which give a long account of the wickedness of the people ; and that God had suffered the beautiful Temple of Solomon to be destroyed ; but now Cyrus, a good King of Persia, promised to rebuild it, which makes the history of these two books ; and Ezra and Nehemiah were both good men, fearing God and keeping his commandments.

LESSON XXIII. WHICH is the next book to Nehemiah ?

It is called Esther, she was the niece of Mordecai ; who from her humility and modesty was

raised to be a great Queen, the wife of King Ahasuerus.

Who was the favourite of the King?

Haman, whom he made the first man in his palace.

And being himself raised to high honours, did not he wish to promote Mordecai, the Queen's uncle?

No, for prosperity had so hardened his heart, that he could not bear any body should be in favour with the King but himself.

Yet, if he was lifted up, and made a great man, how could the prosperity of another injure him?

Because, when he became first prosperous, he never prayed to God for humility, and Satan seized this opportunity, which he always does when people leave off prayer, and filled his heart with pride; so with greatness he lost his happiness, because he did not like to retain God in his knowledge.

LESSON XXIV.

HAD Satan power over him to do any very wicked action?

Yes, he obtained the King's leave to put all the Jews to death; and poor Mordecai was to be hanged on a gallows fifty feet high.

Did he succeed?

No, for Esther, the good Queen, made the whole scheme known to the King, who was so

shocked at the wickedness of his favourite, that he ordered him to be hanged on the very gallows he had prepared for Mordecai, and Mordecai was advanced to Haman's honours.

What do you learn from this ?

That if Haman had succeeded, and Mordecai had been put to death, he would never have enjoyed a moment's happiness ; for the secret conviction of conscience that God would have known his crimes, though man might not have discovered them, would have rendered him miserable ; for fine clothes and great honours cannot conceal sin and wickedness from the Almighty : it likewise shews me, if I am prosperous, it should be my endeavour to promote the prosperity of others ; and if I do not pray, and strive to have these good desires of Him from whom they proceed, the devil will deceive and ruin me as he did Haman ; and though I may succeed a little while, my conscience will never cease to torment me, There never can, nor ever will be any happiness but in the favour of God.

W LESSON XXV.
HOSE history do you read next ?

The history of Job, who was a very good man, and possessed a great deal of wealth and had a large family.

Then with goodness and wealth and a large family he had the blessing of God ?

So far he had ; but hitherto he had been only seen in prosperity, his faith never having been tried by adversity. Our trust in God is better known, by our conduct under misfortunes and disappointments, than at a time when every thing is prosperous and according to our wishes.

What were Job's trials ?

First the robbers came upon him, stole away his oxen and cattle, murdered his servants, and his sheep were destroyed by fire from heaven : the Chaldeans came and took away his camels, murdered the rest of his servants ; and at the same time a great wind blew down the house and killed his children.

How did Job bear all this ?

It is said, that "in all this Job sinned not, nor charged God foolishly." That is, he never murmured, but submitted, patiently.

LESSON XXVI.

WAS Job further afflicted ?

Yes, with sore boils, from the sole of his foot to the crown of his head.

Did not Satan now come forward and tempt Job to complain ?

Yes, and poor Job had been not only ruined by these losses ; but overcome and worn out with pain and misery from these dreadful boils ; alas ! he was for a short time tempted to complain and murmur to his three friends, who came to see him.

Was he not grieved afterwards, that he had shewn discontent though but for a moment ?

He was, and all his life after was spent in religious conversation with his three friends, in talking, and thinking over the greatness and goodness of God, in endeavouring to repent of his impatience, and in praying that his faith might never fail him again, as all murmuring is want of faith.

LESSON XXVII.

IS not all Job says very fine ?

Oh, yes, particularly the 14th chapter, which I hope to learn, as it makes part of the burial service of the church.

Did the Almighty accept of his penitence and prayer ?

He did, and rewarded him even in this life, having tried his faith to the utmost and seen the sincerity of his heart.

How was he rewarded ?

By having his latter end blessed more than his beginning, by a greater increase of wealth, and a large family ; and Job lived 140 years, and died, being old and full of days.

What do you learn from this ?

To know the reason why Job is called the most patient man, to see that God only has power to give and take away, that man's duty is to submit to his will, that impatience brings shame

to the heart, and submission gives it a desire always to praise God, that praise strengthens faith, and faith is the Christian's bulwark.

LESSON XXVIII.

WHAT part of the Bible comes next?

After the Psalms by King David, and the Proverbs, Ecclesiastes, and Solomon's Song, are the Prophets ; among the greatest are Ezekiel, Jeremiah, and Isaiah.

What do they foretel ?

Many of the workings and events of Providence ; but the greatest of all they are designed to shew, is the promise of the Messiah, or Jesus Christ.

In what prophet is it first foretold in the plainest manner ?

In the 9th chapter of Isaiah, which is the first lesson on Christmas-day ; it is very particularly and wonderfully explained in the 6th verse ; but the surest way to know, is to learn the whole chapter by heart, then I can repeat a few verses at a time very often, so that Christmas-day may live in my heart all the year.

Do you intend to content yourself with only learning one chapter in Isaiah ?

Oh, no, I hope to learn many others, particularly those that relate to the Messiah, or Christ, especially the 40th, as by that means I am told I shall better understand the New Testament, where

the prophecies and the Psalms of David are fulfilled.

LESSON XXIX.

IS there no other amongst the great prophets?

I forgot the wise and good Daniel, who lived at the time of Nebuchadnezzar the proud King of Babylon.

Did he not make a famous decree?

Yes, and he was so angry with any body who worshipped the true God, that he ordered every one at the sound of particular musical instruments, to fall down and worship a golden image, which he set up, threatening if they did not, they should be cast into the burning fiery furnace.

Were there any found faithful enough, to continue their prayers to the true God, notwithstanding the threatenings of the wicked King?

Yes, Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, who, though they were Jews, were employed by the King.

And did those who were Jews, and now the favoured of the Lord, leave the living God, to worship a golden image for the sake of a place about the King?

No, they went on praying and praising the living Lord of heaven and earth.

Did not their righteous boldness reach the King's ear?

Yes, and he was so angry, that he had them

brought before the people, and thrown into the burning fiery furnace, defying the power of the Almighty.

And were they not soon burnt to death ?

They were not ; they feared no arm of flesh, therefore their faith never forsook them one single moment, though the furnace was heated one seven times hotter than ever it was before ; yet the Spirit of God to whom they looked, enabled them to fall down and worship in the midst of the fire ; whereas, had they lost their faith an instant, the flame would have instantly destroyed them.

What do you particularly learn at this time ?

The same as in the history of Abraham and other good men mentioned in the Bible, that patience and submission to the will of God, gives increasing faith, and faith (as I see more and more in every lesson) is the sole support and confidence of a Christian.

LESSON XXX.

DID not even this immediate miracle touch the stony heart of the proud King ?

Yes, he was so confounded at the power of God in preserving, that he went himself and called them out from the midst of the fire, which had not hurt their bodies, nor was a hair of their head singed ; and this proud King called them forth in the name of the Most High God, being at length convinced of his power ; therefore he immediate-

ly ordered all the enemies of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego, to be thrown into the same furnace ; and as their dependence was upon a golden image, the fire consumed them in a moment : so likewise will it be with us, if our dependence is placed upon the golden vanities of this world, we shall be destroyed by fire like them ; but if we endeavour to walk in humility and meekness, trusting in the living Lord of heaven and earth, and believing in his Son Jesus Christ, we shall be supported, even though a fiery furnace be thrown in our way ; and the true God will lead us by the hand, and support us through every temptation.

LESSON XXXI.

WHAT became of Shadrach, Meshach, and Abednego ?

They were promoted in the King's palace, because he was convinced of the power of the true God, whom they worshipped, therefore he made a decree, threatening to punish with death all those who said any thing against the God of those pious men.

And now the King was brought to confess the power of the great Jehovah, did he become a good man ?

No, his very royalty made him forget his humility ; and he never prayed against the danger and sin of pride ; but God does not forget ; and this was the moment which Satan seized on, to

tempt him with high and lofty thoughts of himself ; which made him forget the miracles he had seen, and the daily mercies which had been conferred upon him,—he now began to fancy it was all his own.

Did God humble him for his sins ?

Yes, at the moment he was walking in his palace, and boasting it was all his own, by his own might and his own power, the Almighty seized that very instant, to shew him where the power lay, by driving him among the beasts of the field, and making him eat grass as oxen, until he was convinced that the Most High ruleth over the kingdoms of men ; “ and he did eat grass as oxen, and his body was wet with the dew of heaven, till his hairs were grown like eagles feathers, and his nails like bird’s claws :

LESSON XXXII.

DID God ever shew pity on Nebuchadnezzar again ?—Yes, for after certain days, even in that state of a beast, he lifted his eyes up to heaven ; and then he confessed that his understanding returned, and blessed “ the Most High, and praised and honoured him, that liveth for ever, whose dominion is an everlasting dominion, and his kingdom is from generation to generation.” After this, the kingdom of Babylon was restored to him again ; then did he praise and honour the King of heaven, “ and declared that all his works are truth, and his ways judg-

ment, and those that walk in pride he is able to abase."

What do you learn from this?—The folly as well as the wickedness of trusting in our own strength, when every thing must, and does come from the goodness of God; the danger of living without prayer, lest pride should get the upper hand in our naughty hearts: it is this pride which endangers the soul, and humility only is acceptable to the Almighty.

LESSON XXXIII.

WHAT King is next mentioned, after Nebuchadnezzar?—Belshazzar, who was very impious and wicked.

What did he do?—He made a great feast, and collected all his nobles together, and not contented with eating and drinking more than he ought, which is very wicked, he ordered all the gold and silver vessels to be brought out, which he had carried off from the Temple or great Church at Jerusalem, that they might drink out of them, and they were sinful enough to do it, and praised the gods of gold and silver.

And what was the consequence of such wickedness?—In the very hour whilst they were eating and drinking, and praising false gods, in that very moment, there came forth the finger of a man's hand and wrote upon the wall; and the King himself saw the hand that wrote.

Was he not much terrified?—Yes; it is

said, that “ his countenance was changed, and his thoughts troubled him, that his joints were loosed, and his knees smote one against another.”

What did he do ?——He sent for all the wise men, and promised them great rewards and honours, if they could explain it.

And could they ?——No, it was impossible, because they trusted to their own learning and wisdom ; and never once thought of looking to the Almighty for direction and explanation.

What did the King do now ?——The Queen, his mother, who was a very good woman, and always prayed to God for every thing, came to him and desired him to send for the good prophet Daniel.

And would the pious Daniel come among such wicked scenes ?——To be sure, not only in obedience to the King’s order, but because, as all faithful people are, so he was never so happy as when going about doing good.

LESSON XXXIV.

WHO was most ashamed, Daniel, to come to this fine palace, or the King, to receive him amidst all his great folks ?——The King to be sure ; it is sin brings shame, not our being in an humble station.

What said the King to the prophet ?——He offered him great rewards, if he could explain the hand-writing on the wall ; but Daniel did not attempt it, till he had first exposed the shocking

sins of his life to him. The prophet considered him not as a King, therefore he did not spare his vices any more than he would a poor man's.

But did he explain the writing?—Yes, by telling him, that God had numbered his days, and soon would end them, that his kingdom would be given to the Medes and Persians; but I shall be more acquainted with all these particulars, if I read with attention the 5th chapter of the book of Daniel.

And did not all this frighten the King and make him turn to the true God?—It does not appear that he did; for in that very night, he was slain with all his sins upon his head; which proves the danger of allowing ourselves to begin the practice of any known sins; for none can tell where they shall stop; and before they are aware, their souls may be lost for ever. May I every day say the Lord's prayer with sincerity! "Lead me not into temptation."

LESSON XXXV.

WHO was the next King?—Darius, who soon found out the excellency of Daniel, and that a good spirit was in him, therefore he set him above all the great men and princes of the Empire.

How did they like that?—Not at all, because they were envious, and of course wicked; therefore they laid a plan amongst themselves for his ruin.

How could they do that if his life was so unblameable?—It was at his religious principles and upright conduct their schemes were laid; envy can no more bear superior goodness, than superior station.

What did they contrive against Daniel?—Though Darius was a very amiable King, yet he had one fault he did not sufficiently pray against; and therefore it increased every day; he loved flattery—and was not so willing to hear of his faults as he ought.

How did these men flatter the King?—They made a decree, that if any person should ask a petition of any God or man, except of King Darius, for thirty days, they should be cast into the den of lions.

How could that injure Daniel?—Because they knew no person on earth would hinder him from praying to his God, (as was his custom three times a day) they watched their opportunities, found him on his knees praying to the Almighty, then they went immediately and informed the King.

What did he say?—Not suspecting their wicked deceit when he signed the decree, he was sore displeased with himself (which is always a good sign), he immediately contrived a means of saving Daniel from the lions den.

Did he succeed?—It was impossible, because the laws of the Medes and Persians never can be changed after they are signed.

Was the King obliged to yield?—Yes, and those wicked men had Daniel brought and cast into the lions den; but before they threw him in, the King himself, very much distressed, cried out, “Thy God, whom thou serveest continually, he will deliver thee.” And the King was obliged, after the stone was laid at the mouth of the den, to sign it with his own seal.

LESSON XXXVI.

WHAT did Darius do after?—He returned to his palace, and passed the night fasting, and in lamentations, ashamed and grieved that he should be the cause of Daniel’s being so unjustly and inhumanly treated; and now was convinced with deep sorrow, of the sin of listening to flattery, and loving that, rather than truth.

What did the King do after?—“He arose early in the morning, and went in haste to the mouth of the den, and cried aloud, O Daniel, servant of the living God, is thy God whom thou serveest, able to deliver thee from the lions? Then said Daniel unto the King, O King, live for ever.”

But what could save the prophet from the devouring jaws of the lions?—Faith—a full trust on the power of God; he further said to the King, “My God hath sent his angel, and hath shut the lions mouths, that they have not hurt me, forasmuch as before him innocency was found in me.”

And what became of Daniel?—The King ordered him to be taken out of the den, and all his enemies were put in, who having nothing on their side but sin, and false gods, were devoured before they reached the bottom.

What did the King do to shew his belief in the true God, the God of Daniel?—He immediately made another decree, and addressed it to all people, nations, and languages—"That men should tremble and fear before the God of Daniel, for he is the living God, and stedfast for ever, and his kingdom that which shall not be destroyed, and his dominion shall be unto the end: he delivereth and rescueth, and he worketh signs and wonders in heaven and in earth, who hath delivered Daniel from the power of the lions."

What do you particularly learn from this?—To see the misery and wretchedness of Darius after he had committed this sin, but having repented of it sincerely, and called upon the true God in faith, his prayers were then heard, Daniel was restored, and the King possessed peace of conscience, without which a crown is nothing.

What became of them after?—The King soon died, and Daniel was permitted to go on prophesying, praying, and praising God to the end of his days.

WHAT comes next in the order of the Bible?

LESSON XXXVII.

The twelve lesser prophets, as they are called, the last is Malachi, they were all permitted to prophesy, and foretel events, often alluding to the coming of the Messiah or Christ.

What particular petition should you now offer to God at the close of the Old Testament?—That, for grace and power to praise the Author and Giver of so great a blessing; and it would be well to learn the last psalm, which breathes nothing else, and ends with saying—"Let every thing that hath breath praise the Lord." Amen.

[THE END.]